

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 2 and 4 are cancelled.

New claim 16 is added. Support for the new claim is found, for example, on page 8, lines 20-27, of the application.

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 3 and 5-16 are pending and under consideration.

II. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 6 is amended herein to clarify the claimed features. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

III. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 5, 7-11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Egnell (U.S. 6,590,681) in view of Sridhar (U.S. 5,778,118).

Amended claim 1 recites a rejection/add filter for blocking a third optical signal having one of a plurality of preset wavelengths contained in the passing signal that is branched by the optical branching coupler, inserting the second signal, and coupling the passing signal that passes the rejection/add filter with the second optical signal, the wavelength of the blocked third optical signal being the same as the wavelength of the inserted second optical signal. As the Examiner stated in the Office Action, Egnell, Sridhar and Asahi do not disclose "that the blocking filter and optical coupler elements comprise a rejection/add filter." See page 8, lines 17-20 and page 9, lines 13-16. Nagel also fails to teach or suggest this feature.

Amended claim 1 recites a rejection/add filter for blocking a third optical signal having one of a plurality of preset wavelengths contained in the passing signal. Conversely, Nagel discloses a filter for removing a first telemetry signal from and adding a second telemetry signal to a data signal. See column 2, lines 35-49, of Nagel. Nagel only removes a first signal and adds a second signal. Thus, Nagel fails to teach or suggest a rejection/add filter for blocking a third optical signal having one of a *plurality* of preset wavelengths contained in the passing signal.

Although the above comments are specifically directed to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that the comments would be helpful in understanding various differences of various other claims over the cited references.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

Claims 3, 6, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Egnell in view of Asahi (U.S. 6,195,186).

Amended claim 3 recites a rejection/add filter for blocking a third optical signal having one of a plurality of preset wavelengths contained in the passing signal that is branched by the optical branching coupler, inserting the second signal, and coupling the passing signal that passes the rejection/add filter with the second optical signal, the wavelength of the blocked third optical signal being the same as the wavelength of the inserted second optical signal. Thus, the arguments above with respect to claim 1 also apply to claim 3.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Egnell in view of Sridhar as applied to claims 1 and 9 above, and further in view of Adams (E.P. 1063803).

Claim 12 depends indirectly from claim 1 and adds further limitations thereto. Therefore, the above arguments also apply here.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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